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FOREWORD

As a first step in meeting this Administration's pledge to bring quality outdoor experiences to the people, I instructed the National Park Service and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to undertake an accelerated, professional study of the possibilities of establishing a National Recreation Area at the gateway to New York Harbor.

This report is the result of that study. I am considering it carefully, but in order to get the widest review and reaction possible, I have asked that it be distributed at once.

We must determine the best possible course of action which this Administration can take to meet the high quality outdoor experience in this great metropolitan area.


Walter J. Hickel
Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Walter J. Hickel
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

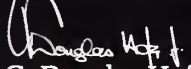
We are pleased to submit for your review the following report outlining a proposal for a Gateway National Recreation Area. The report is based on the study you announced on May 13, 1969. It was prepared by a special study team, comprised of individuals representing a wide range of professional disciplines in the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the National Park Service.

The report recommends establishment of a five-unit national recreation area of some 20,000 acres of land and water around New York Harbor. The vast majority of this acreage is already under some form of public ownership.

In the course of the study, the team worked with many individuals and representatives of Federal agencies, State and county governments, and the City of New York. Their assistance was of immeasurable value throughout the preparation of this document.

To make this proposal a reality will require substantial contributions by the City of New York, the State of New York, the State of New Jersey, and the Federal Government. Establishment of the area as an integral part of the National Park System will be a giant step forward in your program to bring parks to people.

Sincerely yours,


G. Douglas Hofe, Jr.
Director, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation


George B. Hartzog, Jr.
Director, National Park Service





Gateway National Recreation Area A Proposal



Introduction

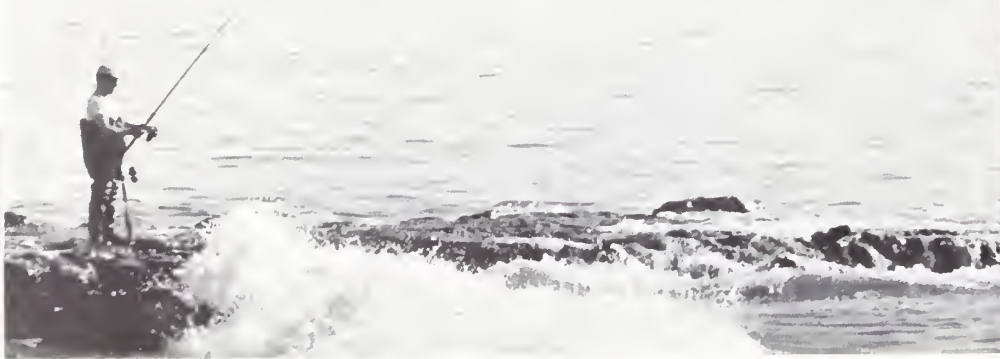
"The rugged grandeur of mountains a thousand miles away means nothing to a city child who is not able to get to them.

The boy sitting on the steps of a ghetto tenement deserves and needs a place where he can discover that the sky is larger than the little place he is able to see through the buildings."

Richard M. Nixon
October 18, 1968.

The need is great, but the resources of the American cities are limited. In the face of other overwhelming problems, recreation often loses out in the struggle for its share of local funds. The need to preserve our environment and provide recreation areas has become a problem of national scope and justifies the direct application of national resources.

"We have got to bring the natural world back to the people," Secretary Hickel said, "rather than have them live in an environment where everything is paved over with concrete and loaded with frustration and violence."



Nowhere is the situation more critical than in the New York metropolitan area. On this relatively tiny piece of land lives one of every 260 inhabitants of this planet.

Yet, only a few miles away from the crowded streets of New York City, Jersey City and Newark, an important natural resource of about 20,000 acres still lies practically unused. Like enormous arms of sand, two low-lying peninsulas embrace the lower waters of New York Harbor, forming the marine gateway to the

country's largest city. Breezy Point, on the southwestern extremity of Long Island, and Sandy Hook, jutting out from the New Jersey Highlands, have some of the last undisturbed, good ocean-front in the New York metropolitan region. Adjacent to Breezy Point is Jamaica Bay, which remains within the Nation's largest metropolis as a relatively unaltered natural area. These three areas together with Great Kills Park on Staten Island and Hoffman and Swinburne Islands, at the entrance of New York Harbor, are a recreation opportunity of national significance that we can no longer neglect but should develop into a five unit Gateway National Recreation Area.

The lands and waters, sands, surf, islands, wildlife, marsh and uplands of these areas lie at the doorstep of 12 million people, including a million families with annual incomes of less than \$5,000 each. By the year 2000, demographers predict the population will increase to 30 million.

Development at Gateway would assure a quality recreation opportunity for these millions and would be an appropriate first step in meeting the recreational needs of the American city.



Like many American cities, the urban centers around Gateway are inhabited by a high proportion of families with limited or no access to automobiles. In New York City alone, there are more than 1.5 million such families. To assure that recreation at Gateway would be available to all of the people living in the area, as well as the millions of other visitors, a low-cost transportation system is required. Proposed is a ferry system linked with existing subway and

rail lines and key road junctions to carry visitors to the five units of Gateway National Recreation Area. Automobiles would be kept at a minimum within the area in order to preserve its environmental quality and to save vital acreage for recreation and open space.

Open to the sun, wind, rain, and stars, Gateway would provide an opportunity for urban dwellers to experience the relaxing benefits of a natural environment close to the infinite wonder of the sea. Commercialization and over-development that mar many public beaches would be avoided.

This proposed recreation area would provide the Nation with an unparalleled opportunity to meet deeply-felt public recreation needs. It marks a breakthrough in recreational planning in its concern for urban dwellers and in its emphasis on low-cost, non-automotive access. It envisions the recreation challenges of tomorrow as well as the needs of today.



Summary

Gateway National Recreation Area is the first step in a major new national conservation effort to bring parks to the people—a program designed to provide a better life for all citizens.

It would consist of five units totaling more than 20,000 acres of land and water. New York City is being requested to donate to the United States approximately 2,100 acres of park land and 9,500 acres of Jamaica Bay now in city ownership. The State of New Jersey is being asked to do the same with its holdings at Sandy Hook. The Department of Defense has been requested to make Forts Hancock and Tilden available when those lands required for the

purposes of national security are no longer needed. Two residential communities, Broad Channel in Jamaica Bay and the Breezy Point Cooperative on Breezy Point are part of the general land mass. Broadly-based congressional and citizen support is essential if this plan is to become a reality. When completely developed, it would be capable of serving over fifty million visitors annually.

Only by visiting these waterfront expanses can one catch their true appeal and appreciate their great recreation potential. The chief characteristics of the five units are:



Breezy Point—a sea-washed peninsula with 4½ miles of ocean beach. Its 3,650 acres include 1,350 land acres shared primarily by two city parks, the Army's Fort Tilden, and a residential cooperative. This site when completed would provide swimming, fishing, and boating, as well as cultural and educational complexes, for 300,000 people a day.

Sandy Hook—an historic peninsula, with six miles of ocean beach, reaching northward at the northeast tip of New Jersey. The Hook extends dramatically into the Atlantic within seven miles of Breezy Point. Almost all of Sandy Hook is Department of Defense property. Of the 1,700 land acres, 745 are leased to the State which uses 460 acres for Sandy Hook State Park, New Jersey's most popular State park. A NIKE site and old Fort Hancock, with its trim streets, and structures designed by noted Architect Stanford White, comprise most of Sandy Hook north of the State park.



Excellent surf fishing and rolling waters for surfing and swimming characterize the Hook. The sheltered coves are ecological gems as are the holly-green briar enclaves that cover much of the Bay side of the peninsula. The site ultimately could accommodate 180,000 visitors a day in facilities similar to, but less intensively developed than those proposed for Breezy Point.



Jamaica Bay—famous for its bird life, is the last large natural area in New York City. While not appropriate for mass recreation, Jamaica Bay is, despite pollution, an ecological treasure of the highest order. Its value for biological research, environmental education study and just enjoying wildlife can scarcely be overestimated. It contains a city wildlife refuge and is

a haven for at least 200 species of birds, including 24 species of waterfowl and several rare varieties of other bird life. Its waters offer surprisingly good fishing.

Great Kills—a man-made city park on Staten Island along lower New York Bay. It contains four miles of beach and a city-managed marina. Great Kills would be able to serve 54,000 swimmers, campers, picnickers, fishermen, and open space seekers daily when developed.

Hoffman and Swinburne Islands—city owned land that will be converted to a single 250-acre island. Located at the entrance of Upper New York Harbor the island would be an inviting stopover for Gateway excursion boats bound from Manhattan and New Jersey ports to Sandy Hook and Breezy Point. Equipped with cafes, restaurants, picnic grounds and prome-



nades, Hoffman-Swinburne would provide an exceptional vantage point for viewing harbor lights and seagoing ships. Framed in the graceful architecture of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, vessels from all corners of the globe pass close to this site as they enter and leave one of the world's busiest ports.





The People and the Need

Many residents of the New York Metropolitan area have neither the time nor the means to visit nearby Long Island beaches or the Jersey shore, but can take an occasional subway ride

to Coney Island. Conditions are often overcrowded and when the 3.4-mile beach is jammed with up to a million people, the average sized man has no room to lie down. Coney Island's beach recorded 22 million visits in 1968.

Much of New York's other 15 miles of public beach is only marginally safe for use or not conveniently served by public transportation. Some beaches are closed because of polluted water.

To assure that Gateway would serve all the people, the least mobile part of the population was located and identified. Confined to their neighborhoods by poverty, these citizens have little contact with nature. Like most New York residents they are completely dependent on public transportation and nearby recreational



resources. Their communities are short of playgrounds and swimming pools. In many areas population densities range up to 138,000 per square mile. Housing, school and law enforcement needs prod the local governments for priority.

Gateway National Recreation Area, easily and inexpensively accessible, could serve all the people. It could provide some with a high quality recreational enjoyment they have never experienced.



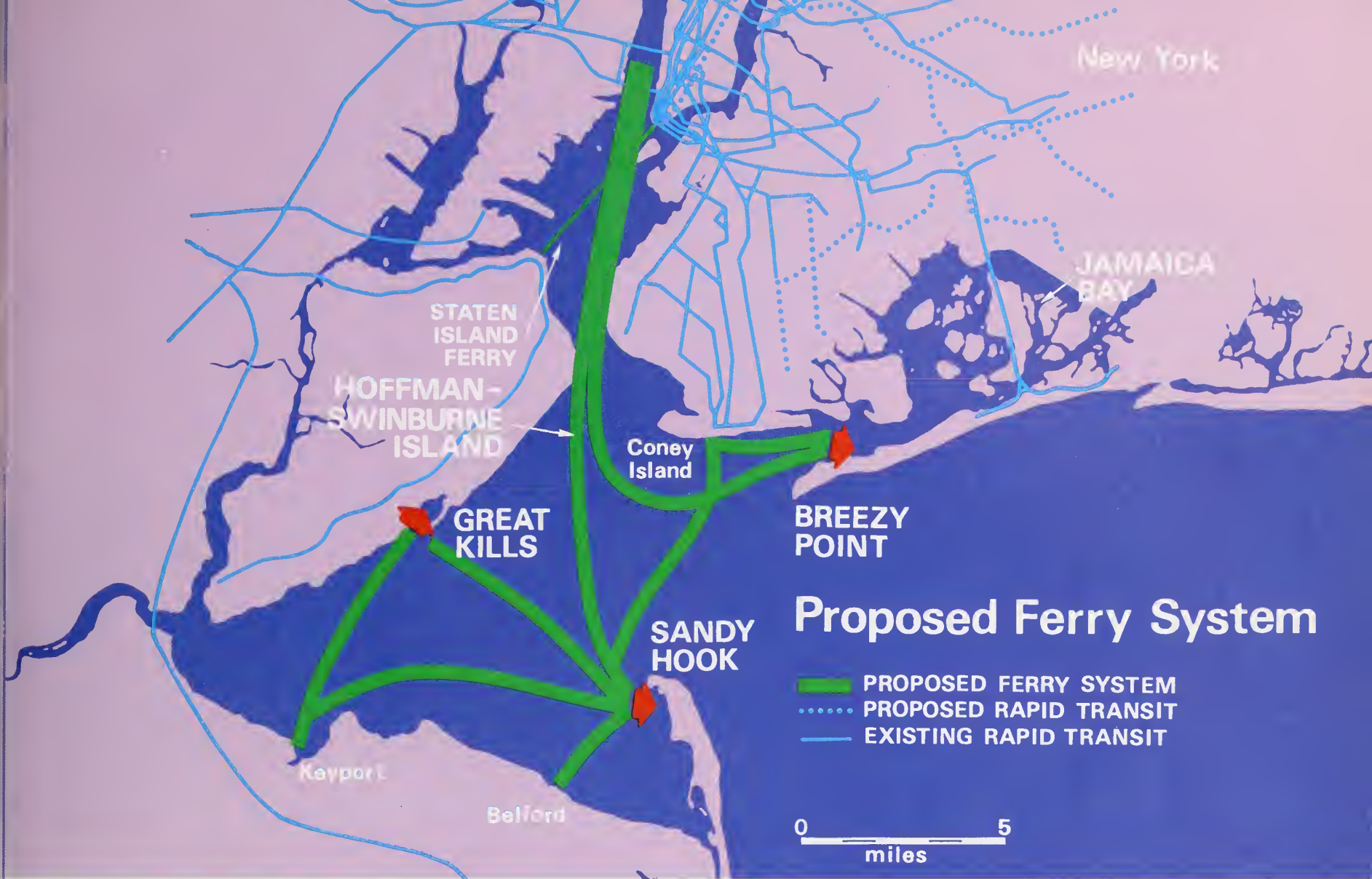
Access

Significant numbers of people residing in the New York Metropolitan Area do not own cars and are dependent on public transportation. Automobiles cannot and should not do the job. Highways in and near the Recreation Area are already overtaxed. Gateway lands are too valuable for recreation to permit conversion to roads and parking lots.

To solve the problem of mass transportation a concept using a system of marine transports was developed. These low fare boats would link the units with existing subway and rail terminals and with key highway junctions. Existing docks would be used in the Upper Bay and along the Hudson River in Manhattan and New Jersey. New docks would be needed on Coney Island, along the south shore of Raritan Bay, and at four units of the National Recreation Area. Eventually, when commuter priorities permit, rapid transit lines may reach the edges of the major units.

The marine transportation system would consist of a series of shuttles using several smaller capacity boats on a short run schedule in combination with a number of large capacity boats making extended trips and serving locations in the urban communities of New York and New Jersey.

Regardless of the visitor's choice of departure, he would begin his day's experience the moment he boards the boat. Leisurely travel on the marine highway would heighten the visitor's sense of arrival at Gateway.



To Breezy Point

Subway lines now extend to Coney Island, which lies across narrow Rockaway Inlet from Breezy Point. The Coney Island Station can accommodate 200,000 people an hour. Four ferryboats would shuttle between here and Breezy Point. This pleasant 20-minute boat ride would open the visitor's outing in a scenic and holiday atmosphere.

Under an existing 10-year city plan, another subway line will be extended to Flatbush Avenue and Avenue U just across the inlet from Jacob Riis Park. Eventually this subway may be extended to the peninsula.

The highways to Breezy Point over the Marine Parkway and Cross Bay Bridges are often so overloaded that the parking lot at Jacob Riis Park is rarely filled. During the summer, trackless trains will provide transportation beyond that point.

To Sandy Hook

New Jersey State Route 36 is now the principal access to the Sandy Hook peninsula. This four-lane highway connects with the Garden State Parkway at Matawan 14 miles to the west. Both roads are jammed on summer weekends.

Most visitors reach Sandy Hook State Park by car. When operational as a national area the land available for public use would be three times the area of the State park and would attract even heavier visitation. To relieve the massive traffic jams that would occur on Route 36, a shuttle ferry is planned. Boats would provide a short cut across the Bay to Sandy Hook's tip, relieving drivers of multiple traffic headaches and parking problems. Plans call for construction of a ferry dock near Belford, some seven miles west by road but only



five miles by water from the Hook. A spacious parking facility is planned at the ferry terminal. A second dock would be provided at Keyport, seven miles farther west. An interfacing bus or rail line would link Keyport with Matawan and its rapid transit station on the electrified surface line to Jersey City, Newark, and New York connections.



To Jamaica Bay

Cross Bay Boulevard, a six-lane roadway, almost bisects Jamaica Bay. Access is also provided by a subway line running parallel to the boulevard.

To Great Kills

A rapid transit line connects Great Kills on Staten Island with Newark-Jersey City railroads and the Manhattan Ferry. This city-managed harbor will make a valuable addition to the Gateway and provide an inviting means of access for private boat owners.

To Hoffman-Swinburne Island

When expanded to 250 acres under a 10 year landfill plan, Hoffman-Swinburne will become a popular mid-harbor link in the Gateway chain. Ferryboats would provide the major access.

Summary

By providing visitor access through a system of rail transit and ferryboats, Gateway would contribute an exciting concept in recreation planning. Emphasis on the "water highway" also has these distinct advantages:



1. Ferry service is independent of city, State or Federal priorities for mass commuter transit.
2. The visitor's recreation experience would begin as soon as he boards the boat.
3. Water transit could fill the transportation gap until rapid transit is extended to Breezy Point and Sandy Hook.
4. Water transit is flexible and could be adapted to the unpredictable and ever changing public desires.

The Five Units and Their Development

Gateway's five sites were selected because they have important characteristics in common—Each is relatively non-urban in character. Each is free of high density residential development. Each is a water-endowed resource suitable for varied recreation use.

Aside from the obvious swimming, fishing, picnicking, and playfield developments, the preclusion of additional automobiles allows an opportunity for development of a variety of outdoor spaces. By providing a natural setting and an abundance of indoor and outdoor space

users would be encouraged to develop their own programs and to undertake activities that can become part of their daily lives between visits to Gateway.

"Recreation" is a mutable concept, constantly changing with the seasons and the times. It would be unwise to so fix the character of a recreation area that it cannot meet the changing needs of those it proposes to serve. Community needs will suggest their nature and character. Spontaneous play activity would be encouraged, and schools, performing arts groups and community and religious organizations would bring their activities into the area year around.



Breezy Point

The Breezy Point peninsula is about 4½ miles long and one-half to three-quarters of a mile wide. This area has been developed to a limited degree.

At the easterly end of the Breezy Point unit lies Jacob Riis Park, an intensely developed city beach. West of and adjacent to Riis Park is Fort Tilden, which is largely inactive except for a NIKE installation and Army Reserve facilities. Next to the Fort is the east section of city-owned Breezy Point Park with its leased beach club, unfinished high-rise and related

structures, and open space. The remainder of this parkland takes in the tip of the peninsula, where a single beach club is the only encroachment.

Between the two park parcels lies the major portion of the Breezy Point Cooperative, a largely seasonal residential community of more than 2,700 units. The widest and best beach, more than 1,000 feet deep in places, fronts the Cooperative. The detached Roxbury section of the community is located a mile to the east on the bay side north of Fort Tilden.







Because of its location within the city and its relatively natural state, Breezy Point is one of the most important recreational resources in the New York region. This seashore would be much more than just a place to swim and sunbathe. It is large and diverse enough to support a wide variety of overnight and year-round educational and cultural uses.

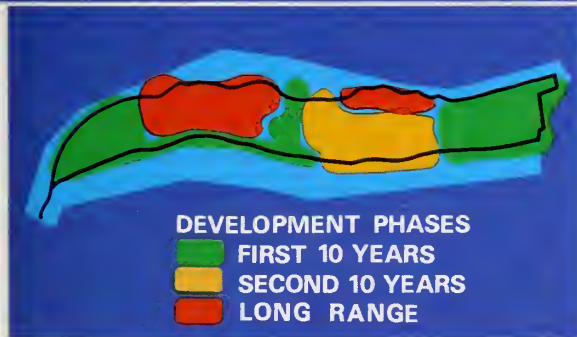
Most people would go to Breezy Point to swim, but many would go to hike, fish, listen to music, see exhibits, view performing arts, gaze at the stars, picnic, and learn about their environment. With careful development, Breezy Point can handle 27 million visits a year.



Breezy Point Unit

- 1 ORIENTATION-RECREATION CENTER
- 2 YEAR-ROUND CULTURAL & OVERNIGHT FACILITIES
- 3 GAME COURTS & PLAYING FIELDS
- 4 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COMPLEX
- 5 BEACH CENTERS
- 6 N.R.A. MAINTENANCE & RESIDENTIAL AREA
- 7 NATURAL WALKWAY

-  INTERNAL TRANSPORT SYSTEM
-  PROPOSED N.R.A. BOUNDARY
-  HIKING-BIKING TRAILS & SERVICE ROADS
-  SURF FISHING & FISHING PIERS
-  RAPID TRANSIT (future)
-  PORTABLE PAVILIONS



Most visitors would arrive at the bayside central ferry terminal. Here would be shelter, waiting areas, refreshment stands, toilets, and a recreation center. From the terminal a raised

promenade would lead to the main activities area, passing along pavilions, cafes, rest areas, and places for the performing arts. This would be the most spirited area on Breezy Point. Game courts, playing fields and a beach house would be easily reached from the promenade. The two existing 15-story structures would be completed and used as a year-round cultural and educational complex. These buildings would be designed to have overnight accommodations for groups. Space on the lower levels would be multi-purpose and adaptable to meetings, performances, seminars, exhibitions, and training and educational activities.

The high-rises efficiently use the limited acreage on Breezy Point. The same square footage of interior space would, if spread out, preempt much land vitally needed for recreation.

When the whole unit has been developed, swimmers would find miles of ocean beach and six beach centers connected by an internal shuttle system. The beach centers would have bathhouses, concessions, indoor recreation space, playing fields, playgrounds, and performing areas. Boardwalks would link the centers. Smaller beach centers would serve low-density swimming beaches on the bay.



Sandy Hook Unit

- 1 FERRY TERMINAL
- 2 WALKWAY TO BEACH
- 3 BEACH CENTERS
- 4 ORIENTATION-RECREATION CENTER
- 5 GAME COURTS & PLAYING FIELDS
- 6 BUS & AUTO PARKING
- 7 N.R.A. MAINTENANCE & RESIDENTIAL AREA

Sandy Hook

Six miles long and one mile wide at its widest point, Sandy Hook extends into Lower New York Bay within seven miles of Breezy Point.

The Department of Defense owns most of Sandy Hook's 1,700 acres; Fort Hancock, a picturesque coastal defense installation of a by-gone era, occupies 983.5 acres. The State leases 745 acres, using 460 acres and 12 acres of its own as Sandy Hook State Park. This site on the lower part of the Hook is the most heavily visited State Park in New Jersey. Other properties are a 4.5-acre Coast Guard station at the peninsula's tip and a Bureau of Sport Fish-

eries and Wildlife Marine Laboratory.

Sandy Hook, one of the Atlantic Coast's famous landmarks, has the country's oldest operating lighthouse. The Hook has felt the imprint of history and the footsteps of an army in its sands. British General William Clinton, fleeing to New York from the Continental Army, evacuated 10,000 men and their supplies from Sandy Hook in 1778. Later a French fleet pinned down a British fleet in Sandy Hook Bay but was unable to cross sand bars to destroy it.

Sandy Hook, with long, wide beaches, quiet bayside coves and salt marsh, is rich in natural

values and is a haven for a wide variety of waterfowl, shore birds and other wildlife.

Initial development of this unit would include Sandy Hook State Park. The Army land would be developed as soon as it can be made available.

Most visitors would ride a ferry to the tip of Sandy Hook, sailing down one of the busiest harbors in the world or across the Bay below the picturesque Highlands. As on Breezy Point, there would be shelters, walkways, and promenades leading to nearby developments, and an internal transport system connecting areas more distant. The existing State park parking



lots would be used mainly by fishermen and for charter buses.

By clustering bathhouses and snack bars at intervals along the swimming beaches, stretches of the beach would remain open. Some would be zoned for surfing or surf casting. Fishing piers would be constructed on both the ocean and bay sides. Off-season and during off-hours in summer, the entire beach would be open to surf casters.

Bunkers and gun emplacements coinciding with the beach centers would be worked into the design of the clusters. Others would be retained as large-scale play devices. All clus-



ters would have picnic areas, playing fields, and considerable multi-purpose open space.

The Coast Guard station and lighthouse would continue operations and, when practical, be open to visitors. The Marine Laboratory would remain, and Rutgers University would estab-

lish a shellfish research station. To complement the functions of these research units a museum would be developed to display and interpret marine life. Part of Fort Hancock's Officers' Row, designed by architect Stanford White, would be retained to preserve a sense of the old Army post.

Much of Sandy Hook, however, would remain undeveloped. Trails would be provided for hikers, bicyclers, and those who like to wander about in an untrammelled seaside environment. Spermaceti and Horseshoe Coves and the surrounding holly forest would be preserved as environmental study areas, open for both casual study and serious research.



Jamaica Bay

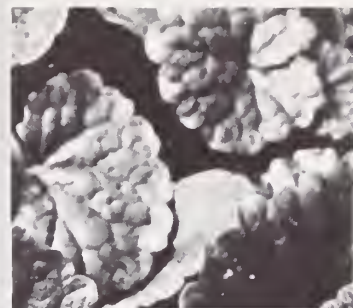
Jamaica Bay is a modern miracle. Polluted, invaded, ravaged, neglected, bisected, despoiled and littered, this doughty old salt-water marsh remains an ecological Fort Knox. Though poor in its purity rating, it is rich in fish and wildlife; some 200 species of birds have been reported in Jamaica Bay at breeding and migration periods. The city has a wildlife refuge covering much of the Bay.

The Bay is largely marshland, three by five miles, covering some 9,500 acres. Its southwest corner almost touches the Breezy Point unit. It adjoins Kennedy Airport on the east and faces Rockaway Peninsula on the south.

Jamaica Bay fascinates biologists and the nature-minded not only for its wealth of birdlife but also because of the seemingly sturdy health of its ecological communities in the midst of unhealthy conditions. Few natural areas must contend with such polluted waters and air conditions. To have this outdoor research labora-

tory within a region of 12 million people is of indeterminable value.

The primary goal at Jamaica Bay is to perpetuate and interpret the natural values. Most existing structures would be demolished. A major interpretive center would be located near Broad Channel Island, which can be reached by both car and subway. Development of an urban environmental research center is recommended.



In the south-center of the Bay lies Broad Channel Community, occupying approximately 320 acres of land owned by the city of New York and containing approximately 1,050 residential and 160 commercial structures which have been erected over the years. This community presently operates under a five-year use permit with the city of New York.



Great Kills

This city park is a flat landfill of about 1,450 acres of land and water with four miles of beach and a good harbor. A nearby rapid-transit line connects with railroads from Newark and Jersey City and the Staten Island ferry. Road access is adequate.

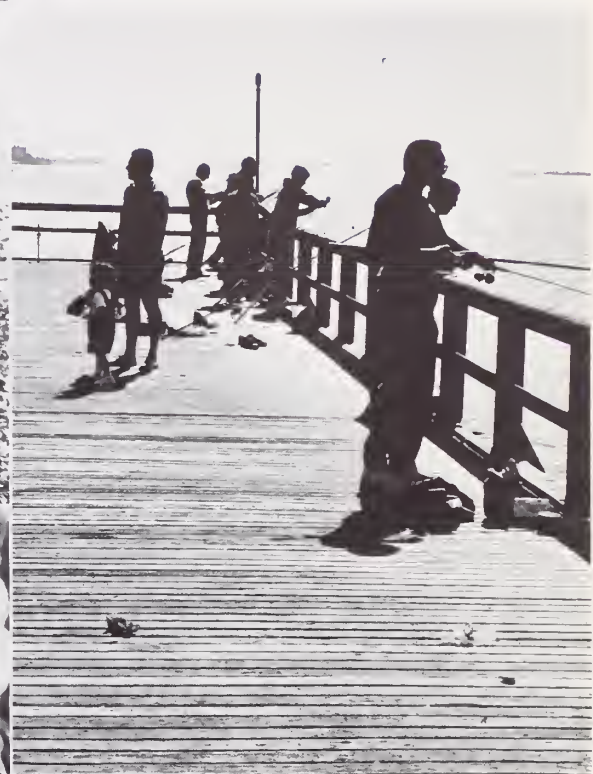
Not all of Great Kills Park, however, is included within the project. As shown on the above map, the northeasterly two-mile extension has been excluded. The remaining area, totaling about 1,240 acres, constitutes the unit and contains two miles of beach, the harbor, and the adjacent open space.

The Great Kills unit would be developed primarily for group camping, swimming, fishing, picnicking, and environmental education. Excessive debris and poor water quality now cause the beaches to be closed to swimmers. This unit would not be fully developed until it

is certain that the harbor water is clean enough for safe swimming. The excluded portion should be retained within the city park system. This bay strip is separated from the South Beach development by the small military installation at Miller Field. Should Miller Field become excess to military needs it is desirable that the city acquire it for park purposes. This would permit consolidation of the three sections into one contiguous beach park.

Hoffman-Swinburne Islands

These two small city-owned islands lie just below the Narrows. The city plans to join them



by landfill, and create a 250-acre, mile long island. The New York City Department of Sanitation has estimated that the operation would take ten years to complete once started.

Ships from every seagoing Nation pass by these islands in one of the great maritime spectacles of the world. When the new island is finished, promenades, outdoor cafes, and family picnic areas would be developed. Ten thousand visitors a day would find here fresh air, a pleasant place to eat, and a fine vista from which to view the passing harbor traffic.



The Gateway Experience

Visitors would come to Gateway to relax and enjoy themselves. If they like a beach with many people on it, they could find it. If they prefer a lonely beach for a solitary walk along the sea, they could find it.

They could experience the excitement of surfing or of landing a "striper". Or they can simply read or rest, with the waves rolling in at their feet.

They could indulge their talents and hobbies, participate in beach sports, and in competitive games, outdoor or indoors.

Though they would come to Gateway for fun and relaxation, many visitors also would be

eager for new experiences, which can be enlightening, constructive—even educational—but, still entertaining.

Environmental education would be an important part of this recreation experience: few places better depict man's effects on his natural environment than do those selected for Gateway.



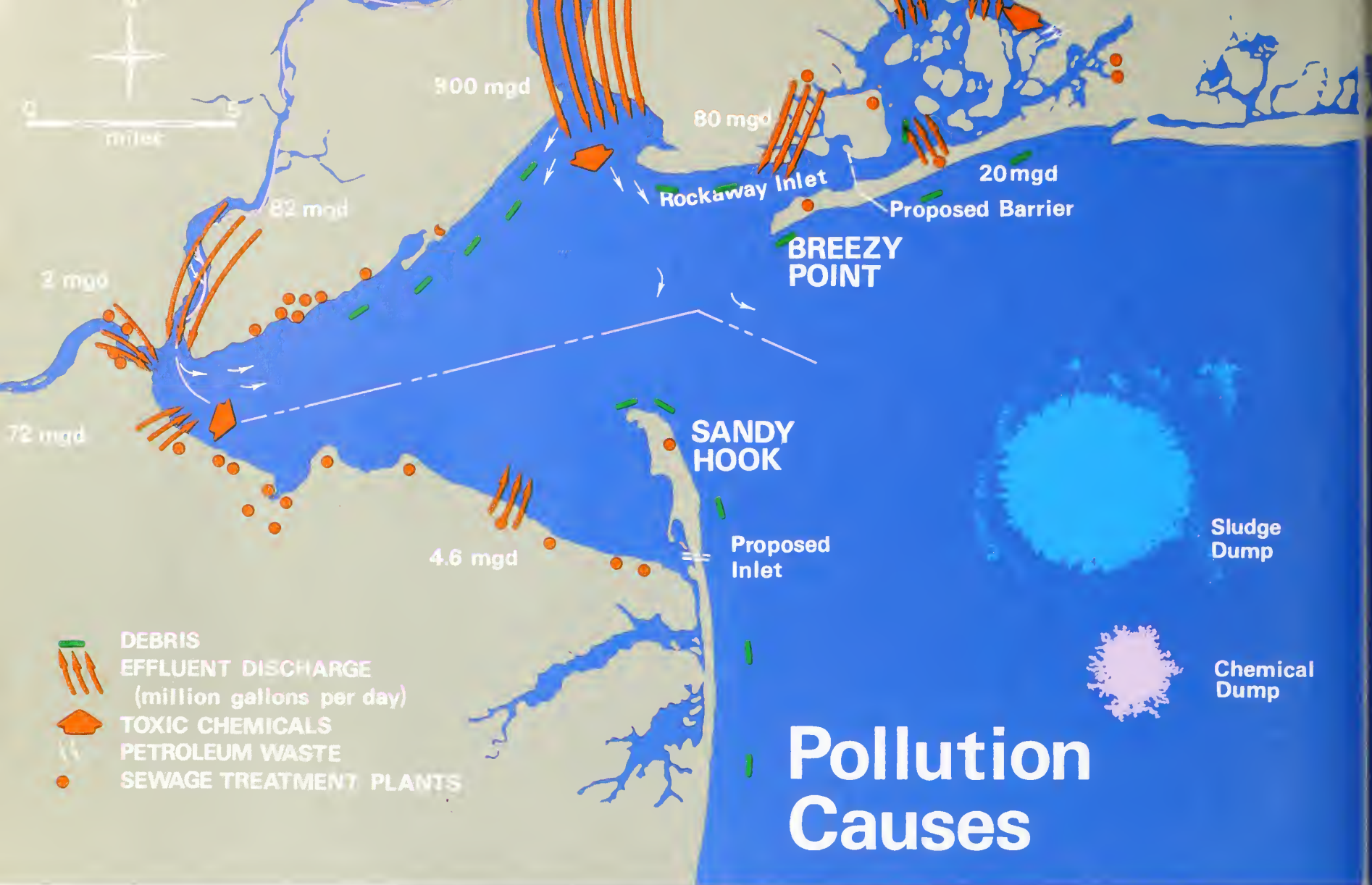
The environmental study areas are outdoor laboratories that relate the user to his world. They lead to an understanding of man's role in nature so that the daily events of his life become a personal participation in the total environment.

Gateway presents an opportunity for environmental education. All of Jamaica Bay and the Spermaceti Cove - Horseshoe Cove area of Sandy Hook are environmental study areas of great variety and importance, and almost every

area in all of the units could be effectively used to study the environment and man's use of and impact on it. Day use center and environmental education complexes would be provided in the main units.

Though conceived primarily for recreation, Gateway National Recreation Area eventually

may find some of its most far-reaching benefits through its environmental education program. Generations of school children, teachers, Scout troops, youth groups, scientists and average Gateway visitors would learn of man's abuse of his environment and perhaps be stirred sufficiently to take action to clean the air and waters and to plan healthy and attractive communities.



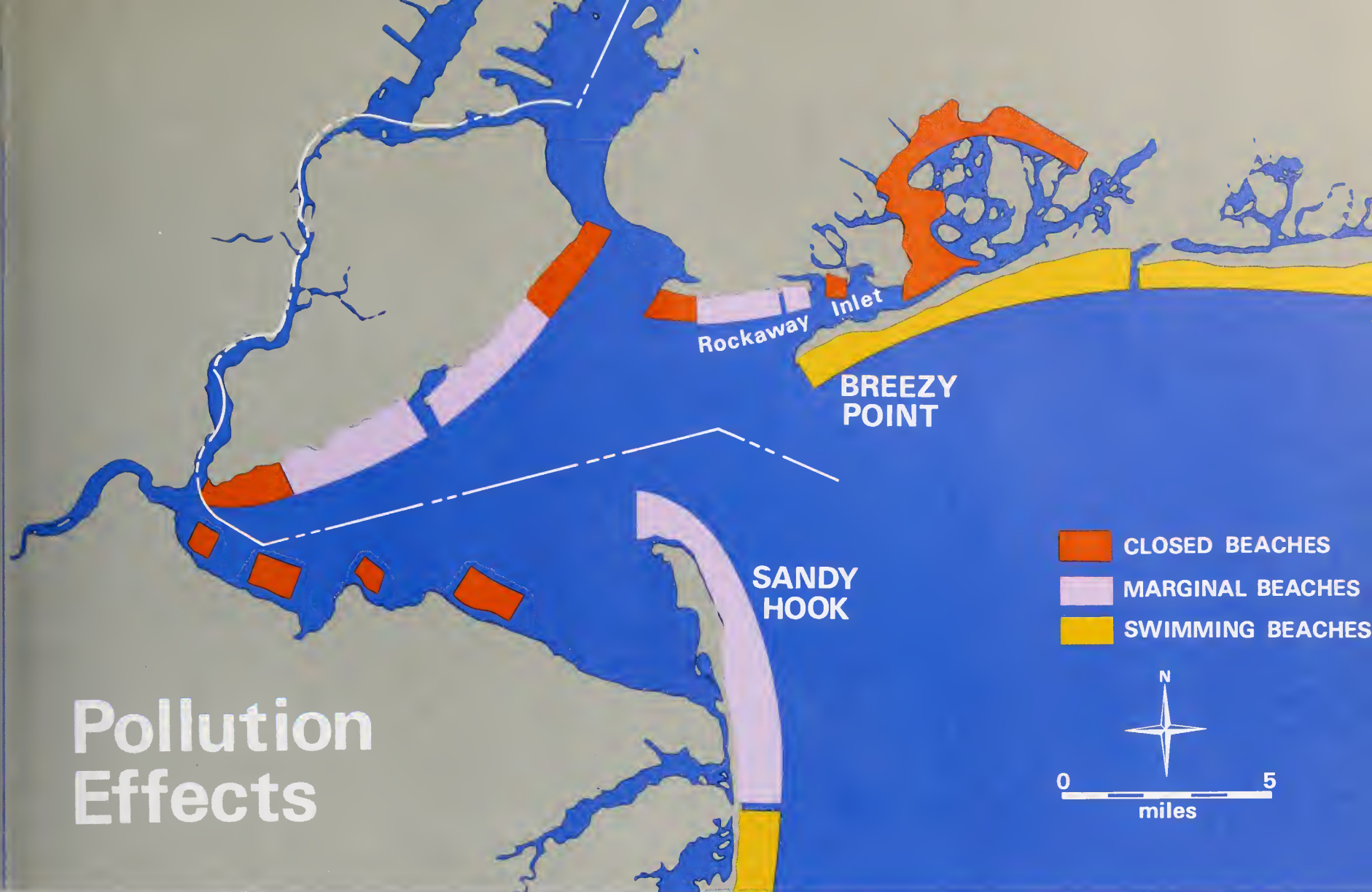
Complementary Action

If Gateway is to realize its true potential, it must receive complementary action from governmental units at every level, from private enterprise and from the private citizen.

To assure that Gateway would serve the recreation needs of the people and achieve the results for which it is designed, a permanent Advisory Commission is recommended. The Commission would advise the Secretary of the Interior in the planning and management of Gateway National Recreation Area. Not only should political, civic, and adjacent resident groups be represented, but also and most important, the people who would use the area should be granted a voice on all matters relating to the Area.

Pollution

The gravest problems facing Gateway National Recreation Area concern the polluted waters. Breezy Point has the only unpolluted ocean beaches. Sandy Hook's seafront, however, is only marginally polluted, as is the Lower Bay beach at Great Kills. Jamaica Bay, Rockaway Inlet and Raritan Bay are heavily polluted with waste discharge, and New York Harbor is largely a cesspool of industrial and human waste.



Cleaning up these waters is not an impossible task. It has been started, but the job will require more money and resolution than demonstrated by any level of government so far. The attack will only be successful if all the resources are combined into one major effort. Most of all, the people of the region must want these waters clean.

This attack on pollution is underway.

- Three Pollution Enforcement Conferences, requested by the Governors of New York and New Jersey, have been convened by the Secretary of the Interior to attack pollution in New York Harbor and Raritan Bay. These have resulted in schedules for remedial action.
- The states of New Jersey and New York have drawn up plans and the Federal Government has approved them for cleaning the harbor and adjacent waters to a point where they are safe for swimming and shellfishing.
- New York State has embarked on a one billion dollar statewide pollution abatement pro-

gram. The voters of New Jersey will be considering a statewide pollution bond issue this fall.

- The city of New York, the Rand Corporation, and Science Engineering, Inc., have embarked on a comprehensive ecological study of Jamaica Bay to determine the quantitative and qualitative effects of pollution.
- The Federal Water Pollution Control Administration is maintaining continuing surveillance on the area's pollution problems and the status of progress toward abatement.



Obviously a start has been made, but only that. The Department of the Interior will continue to work in concert with State and local authorities to accelerate progress toward this goal. Only through such progress can we assure that the beaches and waters of the Gateway area will be available for enjoyment and use.

City Parks and Beaches

Gateway National Recreation Area would stimulate increased interest by the States and local governments in making improvements and additions to their park systems in the Metropolitan Area.

Additional urban parks are needed to meet the daily needs of a fast-growing population, especially in high-density, low-income areas. Funds from every governmental and private sector must be made available for neighborhood and community recreation needs.

Continued expansion of the Coney Island recreation program on a year-round scale can help meet the needs. A center for oceanography and a maritime museum would be appropriate additions to the Coney Island ice skating rink and aquarium complex.

Increased development of the Rockaway Beaches also would provide needed recreation opportunities.

It is recommended that the city develop its parklands along Jamaica Bay's North shore where there are community and neighborhood recreation needs. The natural shoreline can be retained and pedestrians provided access across the Shore Parkway. Here, too, space is at a premium so plans that discourage automobile patrons appears desirable.



Staten Island has a valuable resource in 2.5 mile South Beach on lower New York Bay but the polluted waters prevent swimming. Rotting timbers and other debris infest the water and litter the beach. Joint Federal, State, and local programs to improve the water quality sufficiently to permit use of this beach are badly needed. Ample parking facilities and good public transit access are among the advantages at South Beach.

Rapid Transit

Eventual construction of a rapid transit line into the Rockaways in the vicinity of the Ma-

rine Parkway Bridge is considered likely. A short rail line could then tie into the city line to speed visitors to the Breezy Point Unit. With increased residential developments on the Rockaway peninsula it may also become feasible to connect the existing Rockaway line to a Marine Parkway Bridge crossing.

Connections between the existing transit lines and ferry shuttle points along Raritan Bay are especially needed. It is recommended that New Jersey public utility authorities consider this need in their transportation planning.

Military Lands

A number of active military installations bordering on New York Harbor have significant recreation potential. These sites should be considered for inclusion in the Recreation Area as they become excess to military needs.

Corps of Engineer Projects

There are four U.S. Army Corps of Engineer projects currently under consideration that could affect the proposed National Recreation Area. The first of these is a project for widen-



ing and deepening existing channels in Jamaica Bay. The effect of such action on the ecology of the Bay must be carefully weighed.

The second project involves straightening the channel which passes off the tip of Sandy Hook. In the process, the tip will be cut back. While this will reduce the acreage of the Hook, it does not appear at this time that it will adversely affect the Recreation Area and it could provide sand for beach replenishment.

The third, an authorized beach erosion and hurricane protection study project, involves "a hurricane barrier 4,530 feet long, across the entrance to Jamaica Bay with a 300-foot navigation opening and tainter gates on each side of the opening, dikes and levees 1.2 miles long to high ground north from the barrier; and dikes, levees, and floodwalls, 7.7 miles long, south and east from the barrier to and along the oceanfront to high ground at the eastern end of the Rockaway Peninsula***." The barrier across Jamaica Bay may affect tidal exchange, salinity and water temperature. The Corps is testing a model to determine the probable effects on Jamaica Bay.

The fourth project, also an authorized one, is to create an inlet through Sandy Hook just north of Plum Island. This project must be watched closely to assure that an adequate sand bypass is provided to rebuild and maintain the beach on the Hook north of the inlet, and that there will be no adverse effects on water quality along the beaches by pollutants flowing through the inlet from Raritan Bay.



Here then is the opportunity and the challenge. Is it possible to provide a recreation area of national significance and preserve open space within a teeming megalopolis? It is not only possible, it is necessary if we are to meet President Nixon's charge to all Americans when he said on October 18, 1968:

"Our cities must not be allowed to become concrete prisons. The creation of national parks and outdoor recreation areas near the large cities is as vital a part of the strategy of quality as the preservation of the great forests and rivers of the West."

This proposal emphasizes that determination. Gateway would provide the needed resource in abundance, making it available to all the people through quick and inexpensive access. It would be a beginning for a new national policy of bringing "parks to the people."

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ON RAT TRAPS**



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